

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND PARK AND  
RECREATION BOARD JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING

May 29, 2007

The Lower Paxton Township Board of Supervisors and Parks and Recreation Board joint workshop meeting was called to order by Chairman William B. Hawk, at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29, 2007, in Room 174, at the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Board members present in addition to Mr. Hawk were: William C. Seeds, Sr., William L. Hornung, Gary A. Crissman, and David B. Blain.

Parks and Recreation Board members present were: Thomas B. George, Jr., Kenneth Beard, Mary Jane Hornung, Neal Johnson, Robert MacIntyre, and Kathy Stone.

Members from staff in attendance were George Wolfe, Township Manager; Steve Stine, Township Solicitor; Dianne Moran, Planning and Zoning Officer; and Brian Luetchford, Parks and Recreation Director

Also in attendance: John DiSanto and Pete Leone, Triple Crown Corporation; and Eric Epstein, Stray Winds Area Neighbors.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Blain led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**Public Comment**

No public comment was presented.

**Old Business**

Discussion regarding the recreation area proposed for the Stray Winds Farm subdivision plan

Mr. Hawk noted that Triple Crown Corporation (TCC) has proposed a community park within the Stray Winds Farm Development which would be available to the public. He noted that

comments have been received from the Stray Winds Area Neighbors (SWAN), and at this time he would like to receive input from the members of the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB).

Mr. Wolfe explained that the purpose for this meeting is to discuss the park proposal from TCC with the PRB members, specifically, in what is being offered by TCC in regards to the Township's fee-in –lieu ordinance requirements. He noted that it is to be discussed if the proposal meets the terms and conditions of this ordinance.

Mr. George noted that he would speak on behalf of the PRB. He explained that the PRB members have one purpose, to find more land for park uses due to the increase in population in the Township. He noted that the PRB has been unable to secure more ground for recreational purposes, and it was determined that a tract of land was needed in the northwest section of the Township.

Mr. George explained that on March 3, 2004, the PRB sent a letter to the Stabler Family requesting land for a park facility. He noted that on October 3, 2005, the Board of Supervisors followed up with a second request of the Stabler Foundation for parkland. He noted that on May 4, 2006, a letter was sent from the PRB to the Township Zoning Board requesting interest in a traditional park area, and a request was made for an easement along the Paxton Creek. He noted that on October 11, 2006, TCC came to the PRB to present their park plan for their development. Mr. George noted that it was a unanimous decision of the PRB that they could not approve the plan presented by TCC, since it did not meet the terms and conditions of the Ordinance. He noted that TCC's proposal included 6.39 acres, and the Township's Ordinance provides for a requirement of 23 acres based on the number of units proposed. He explained that the 23 acres would be equivalent to two-thirds of the land found in Koons Park. He noted that TCC did not meet the land requirements for the park, and a second concern involved the safety aspect of the

proposed plan that crossed McIntosh Road with four acres of parkland on one side of the road, and two acres on the other side of the road.

Mr. George explained that the PRB has met with Mr. Leone five times to discuss the park plan, and that it was in the interest of the PRB to look out for what was best for the Township.

Mr. George noted that the PRB is planning to meet with the Board of Supervisor in two weeks to discuss the expansion of the population and the shrinkage of the land for future recreational uses.

Mr. Hawk noted that the safety issue has been corrected by TCC and the new proposal would not bifurcate the park, as it would be located on one side of McIntosh Road only. Mr. George noted that this was not reported to the PRB at their last meeting held last Wednesday. Mr. Leone explained that he commended the PRB for their attitude toward him during his attendance at the past five meetings. Mr. George noted that Mr. Leone has a job to do and the PRB respect him for it as he has always been up-front and fair with them.

Mr. Leone explained that he took the comments received from the PRB and Mr. Luetchford, and agreed to eliminate the one piece of proposed parkland on the one side of McIntosh Road. He noted that the land would be left open, with fencing around it, but it would not be part of the recreational space. He noted that the tract of land south of McIntosh Road includes part of the wetlands, and he has met with SWAN to receive their input on the proposal. Mr. Leone noted that a park is needed in this quadrant of the Township, and he has added some items, and increased the area as a result of the comments received from SWAN.

Mr. Crissman questioned if Mr. Leone has anything to show for the new proposal. Mr. Leone answered that it was outlined in his letter, and it was forwarded to the PRB members.

Mr. Wolfe noted that the Township received correspondence from SWAN in regards to what Mr. Leone discussed, and it was forwarded to all members present, but no one has received

official correspondence from TCC regarding the changes. Mr. Crissman explained that the Board members requested the PRB to review the information and meet with them to discuss the issues. He noted that Mr. Leone has meet with SWAN, but he needs to share with the Board members what plan he is proposing.

Mr. Leone noted that the open space north of McIntosh Road will remain as open space, but would not be included as part of the parkland. He noted that everything to the south would remain the same, but the park has been increased from a four-acre tract to a ten-acre tract. Mr. Crissman noted that he needs to hear what TCC is proposing, not what SWAN is looking for. Mr. Leone noted that he was told by John and Mark DiSanto that TCC agrees with the PRB safety issue and would not include the northern area off McIntosh Road for the parkland area. Ms. Stone noted that the PRB has not reviewed a ten-acre park plan. Mr. Leone noted that the new plan evolved over the past week to include an increase in the open space area near the creek. Mr. Leone noted that he would revise the plan and present it to the Township.

Mr. Seeds questioned if the revised plan would include the pond. Mr. Leone noted that the pond is not included as it is part of the tract of land that is attached to the house. Mr. Seeds noted that he would like to see the stream and pond included in the plan. Mr. Leone noted that the stream is included. Mr. Seeds noted that the Township does not have any ponds in its park and this could provide for a place for the children to fish. Mr. Leone noted that the pond was attached to the mansion property.

Mr. Epstein explained that SWAN initiated a dialogue with TCC, and forwarded a proposed resolution to Mr. Luetchford. He noted that he would be happy to walk the Board members through the Resolution since some of the issues identified by the PRB, such as the bifurcation, were not acceptable. Mr. Crissman noted that it is not up to the Board members to be working with SWAN, but to work with Mr. Leone. Mr. Epstein noted that he was trying to

incorporate the comments with the agreement that SWAN has with the eight neighborhoods to find some reasonable medium. He noted that he did not want to undercut the PRB or the Board members.

Mr. Crissman noted that he would like to know how the land would be developed, so the PRB can determine if it fits into the requirements of the ordinance.

Mr. Hawk suggested that Mr. Leone should provide the revised information to the PRB as soon as possible.

Mr. McIntyre explained that the PRB is seeking guidance from the Board of Supervisors regarding the acceptance of the proposed plan. He noted that to accept the plan, the PRB would violate current Township ordinances, and he noted that the PRB cannot recommend something that would violate the Township ordinance. Mr. Hawk noted that the ordinance would require 22.39 acres and the proposal falls short of that. Mr. Leone noted that TCC would need a waiver from the Board for the reduction in land space. Mr. Stine noted that a third option would be to provide the ten acres plus additional money, or improvements.

Mr. Seeds noted that he agreed with Mr. George in his comment that the Township needs more parkland in that area of the Township. He noted that he would like to see half of the 22 acres in land or make up the difference in improvements or money. Mr. Seeds noted that he would like to see water included in the parcel as well. Mr. Leone noted that he has included the area along the stream.

Mr. Seeds questioned if there was a consensus from the PRB and Board of Supervisors if more land is necessary, or improvements, or fee-in-lieu, or a combination of all three. Mr. McIntyre noted that the PRB can only work within the current ordinance restrictions. Mr. Leone noted that a significant playground was laid out in the new proposal. Mr. Crissman noted that both Mr. Leone and the PRB know what is required by ordinance, and he suggested that Mr.

Leone needs to take the three options, and present what TCC wants to do to the PRB. He noted that time is an issue and this would move the process along. Mr. Crissman noted that the PRB could recommend that the current plan of ten acres does not meet the ordinance and would not recommend it to the Board.

Mr. Epstein noted that he spent eight months negotiating a settlement, and the settlement narrowed the options since there was a clear cut mandate to protect Paxton Creek. He noted that SWAN made the buffers bigger, and you can't have it both ways. He noted that you cannot have 150 foot buffers or access to the water. He noted that TCC agreed to spend \$1.8 million on traffic issues, and this is a significant public health and safety issue. He noted that it must be understood that everyone will not get what they want, but this is the best agreement that could be reached with the eight neighborhoods, and that it is significant that 111 acres are preserved. He noted that it is significant that there will be over 200 undisturbed acres outside the City of Harrisburg, and it would be a shame to get this far and stumble over a Parks and Recreation issue. Mr. Crissman noted that the PRB has been in existence for a long time, and this is their purpose, and their area of expertise. He noted that for him to make decision, and not involve the PRB in the decision making process, is a simple statement that the PRB is not needed. He noted that the PRB plays a very vital role; therefore, he would not be willing to move forward with a decision until he receives input and a recommendation from the PRB. Mr. Epstein noted that he was trying to model an agreement that would satisfy everyone. He noted that the \$1.8 million spent on the two major intersections of McIntosh and Colonial Roads, and McIntosh and Crums Mill Road would benefit the people who live in the area.

Mr. Seeds noted that the PRB and Board members are responsible for the entire Township, and cannot consider just one area. Mr. Epstein noted that the above mentioned traffic

corrections would benefit all the residents in the Township. Mr. Crissman noted that the first concept is whether to accept the land, with the possibility of three options.

Mr. Leone noted that he went to the PRB first to discuss these issues.

Mr. Hawk noted that the revised plan needs to be presented to the PRB, and the Board members need to provide direction to the PRB. He noted that the three options would be: 1) to adhere to the Ordinance; 2) to accept the ten-acre plan as proposed by TCC; or 3) have a combination of land, donations, or improvements. Ms. Stone questioned if Mr. Hawk was directing the PRB to consider all three options, two of which are adverse to what the Ordinance requires. Mr. Crissman suggested that the Board must give the PRB total flexibility to make the best decision for the community. Mr. Hawk agreed and noted that the plan may not be to the standard, but it is keeping recreation confined to a specific location, as well as traffic issues.

Mr. Blain noted that the newest plan proposes ten acres on one side of the road, and he requested Mr. Leone to prepare this plan for the PRB. He suggested that the PRB should review its Mission Statement to see what it would like to see. He noted that if the PRB recommends that it would prefer the 23 acres of land, then that is the recommendation that it should make, and this would put the decision into the lap of the Board of Supervisors. He noted that the PRB may decide that the ten acres is enough, along with fee-in-lieu for the other ten acres to utilize the funds somewhere else in the northwest area. He noted that another issue that concerns the PRB is the Wolfersberger Tract, and what is best for the Township.

Mr. Hawk noted that he would not want the Board members to provide their opinions until the PRB has made their own recommendation. Mr. George suggested that the PRB should balance what the new plan shows, since there has never been any problem working with Mr. Leone. Mr. Blain noted that if the Board provides flexibility to the PRB, then it allows them to make a decision. Mr. Hawk noted that both Boards have been considered “a listening board” to

review the various opportunities that are available. Mr. George noted that the PRB makes recommendations on areas of their responsibility knowing that the Board of Supervisors will make the final decision. Mr. McIntyre noted that it is important that the Board of Supervisors has authorized the PRB to consider other options.

Mr. Blain noted that the PRB has been charged with developing a strategic vision for future parkland use. Mr. George noted that the PRB would meet as soon as necessary, and would not hold up the process.

Mr. DiSanto noted that he would be very happy to discuss options with the PRB, and it is good that they have been given the opportunity to consider options for the plan. He noted that what the ordinance would require would be economically impossible for TCC to deliver, to include the 23 acres and all the lighted ballfields. He noted that it is generally understood that the Board of Supervisors would be open to listen to options that may be ordinance driven, or a hybrid, or a fee-in-lieu.

Mr. Hawk thanked those present for attending the meeting.

#### Adjournment

Mr. Crissman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Blain seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heberle

Approved by,

Gary A. Crissman

Township Secretary